

Dear Dick,

7/26/74

Your letter of the 23rd just came. I've moved the typewriter into the living room to answer it while trying to keep up with the impeachment hearings just beginning. So I hope this is comprehensible.

Frame-Up. The rights have reverted to me but I have neither the plans nor the means of a reissue, with or without new material. Without means of promotion or presently the time I think the prospects would be poor. However, assuming nothing happens to Ray and there is the scheduled evidentiary hearings and what should follow, the order for a trial, I think the best prospect would be after the trial. My situation is complicated by what should result in something good, a verbal agreement on a movie. I'll explain this because I think a book to accompany it would have the best prospects. (And I would not have to take time to write it.)

These things change, as I realize, but the idea is for the movie now to be about the King assassination but about what amounts to me, the investigation, etc., with only a bit on the shooting from existing pictures.

Without an agent and not wanting to represent myself I asked a friend who is a p.r. man but very well connected with movie interests to represent me. He agreed and then his wife was found to have a malignant brain tumor. I have heard nothing from him since our meeting with the man who put the deal together on the movie. I have merely kept him informed under conditions that require no answer because of his situation. I am assuming he continues to represent me. He was to have heard from someone representing the corporation this week or next. I have heard nothing from him. If his situation worsens, I'll still need someone to represent me.

The only numbers mentioned was an indefinite quarter of a million. The offer is supposed to be of some kind of advance, a nominal sum for me to be research director and consultant, whatever this means in movies, and a percentage of the gross. The package is supposed to yield an estimated quarter of a million. I do hope!

This is complicated by an overt theft by a competitive group (I think without further investigation my records would suffice) which apparently is proceeding with a movie on the assumption my work is public domain and that copyright means nothing. Nor "work product." This group is Wakeford-Orloff. The henchman there is the Lewis who produced Executive Action.

The TOP SECRET TRANSCRIPT book: I have completed the text and it and the document itself are camera-ready except for footnotes already drafted. There is a legal analysis I am to pick up camera ready Tuesday. There will be an appendix of FBI and Secret Service reports in facsimile. I have asked Howard to try to find time to come here and mount them on the sheets I have for reduction for offset (he now knows how) and to give a final reading to the two texts. My wife is engaged in indexing and it should not delay us. The young lawyer who handled the suit for me and who has written the legal memo (this thing can also figure in a coming Congressional debate on amending the Freedom of Information law) is going to borrow the \$5,000 we'll need to print. I have made printing arrangements. We will then worry about promotion, distribution, etc. This is very unbusinesslike but we have no real choice because we both work two days each day. With planning including more than 10% of the 5,000 print for Congressional freebies alone (plus press copies) it is even more unbusinesslike but we can't afford a larger first print even though I am confident we'll sell more if I never leave here for a personal appearance. I would prefer not to go into details but you have a long-standing invitation to visit.

There is going to be a collegenmarket for this book for years. Assassination buffs will want it. Libraries should. I will want distribution but I can't now take time to seek it. I'll be the publisher and there will be full return rights for copies fit for sale. My first book now nine years old is still selling so I expect anything on this subject to continue to have a market that can be significant to me where it would burden a commercial publisher to hold it in stock. There should be subsidiary possibilities.

I am plugging away at the draft of my Watergate book. "One of the contents has been dated yet, which makes me feel good. I have just finished a long chapter on the so-called Baker report, which is part of Nixon's continuing cover-up. If Baker becomes a Republican candidate this chapter alone should have some values.

I am nearing the end of the draft. It is a hot book. Maybe too tough. It is as you perceived May a year ago largely a CIA book, but not unbalanced, accusing it of inventing sin. This Baker chapter, for example, shows how he was exploiting its vulnerability for his own selfish purposes and for Nixon's continuing unimpeachment.

Despite the seeming thorough investigations it has much that is new and news. It provides Nixon's motive for his covering up and his willingness to be blackmailed.

It will also need editing. Much I fear.

The probability of impeachment grows but I have seen no sign of any thinking of what can or will happen if the Senate convicts.

That may be a very ~~black~~ black day.

I can't now approach Billy Hunt. Would you please provide his address?

If you know anyone who might go for the transcripts book - would Gels? - Howard could now out facsimiles together for the "underground" format and the production cost should be quite cheap. I would, of course, return your investment.

Best to all,